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## **Patrice Lumumba**

*First Prime Minister of the Republic of the Congo*

# **Independence Day Speech - 30 June 1960**

### **Men and women of the Congo,**

Victorious fighters for independence, today victorious, I greet you in the name of the Congolese Government. All of you, my friends, who have fought tirelessly at our sides, I ask you to make this June 30, 1960, an illustrious date that you will keep indelibly engraved in your hearts, a date of significance of which you will teach to your children, so that they will make known to their sons and to their grandchildren the glorious history of our fight for liberty.

For this independence of the Congo, even as it is celebrated today with Belgium, a friendly country with whom we deal as equal to equal, no Congolese worthy of the name will ever be able to forget that it was by fighting that it has been won [applause], a day-to-day fight, an ardent and idealistic fight, a fight in which we were spared neither privation nor suffering, and for which we gave our strength and our blood.

We are proud of this struggle, of tears, of fire, and of blood, to the depths of our being, for it was a noble and just struggle, and indispensable to put an end to the humiliating slavery which was imposed upon us by force.

This was our fate for eighty years of a colonial regime; our wounds are too fresh and too painful still for us to drive them from our memory. We have known harassing work, exacted in exchange for salaries which did not permit us to eat enough to drive away hunger, or to clothe ourselves, or to house ourselves decently, or to raise our children as creatures dear to us.

We have known ironies, insults, blows that we endured morning, noon, and evening, because we are Negroes. Who will forget that to a black one said "tu", certainly not as to a friend, but because the more honorable "vous" was reserved for whites alone?

We have seen our lands seized in the name of allegedly legal laws which in fact recognized only that might is right.

We have seen that the law was not the same for a white and for a black, accommodating for the first, cruel and inhuman for the other.

We have witnessed atrocious sufferings of those condemned for their political opinions or religious beliefs; exiled in their own country, their fate truly worse than death itself.

We have seen that in the towns there were magnificent houses for the whites and crumbling shanties for the blacks, that a black was not admitted in the motion-picture houses, in the restaurants, in the stores of the Europeans; that a black traveled in the holds, at the feet of the whites in their luxury cabins.

Who will ever forget the massacres where so many of our brothers perished, the cells into which those who refused to submit to a regime of oppression and exploitation were thrown [applause]?

All that, my brothers, we have endured.

But we, whom the vote of your elected representatives have given the right to direct our dear country, we who have suffered in our body and in our heart from colonial oppression, we tell you very loud, all that is henceforth ended.

The Republic of the Congo has been proclaimed, and our country is now in the hands of its own children.

Together, my brothers, my sisters, we are going to begin a new struggle, a sublime struggle, which will lead our country to peace, prosperity, and greatness.

Together, we are going to establish social justice and make sure everyone has just remuneration for his labor [applause].

We are going to show the world what the black man can do when he works in freedom, and we are going to make of the Congo the center of the sun's radiance for all of Africa.

We are going to keep watch over the lands of our country so that they truly profit her children. We are going to restore ancient laws and make new ones which will be just and noble.

We are going to put an end to suppression of free thought and see to it that all our citizens enjoy to the full the fundamental liberties foreseen in the Declaration of the Rights of Man [applause].

We are going to do away with all discrimination of every variety and assure for each and all the position to which human dignity, work, and dedication entitles him.

We are going to rule not by the peace of guns and bayonets but by a peace of the heart and the will [applause].

And for all that, dear fellow countrymen, be sure that we will count not only on our enormous strength and immense riches but on the assistance of numerous foreign countries whose collaboration we will accept if it is offered freely and with no attempt to impose on us an alien culture of no matter what nature [applause].

In this domain, Belgium, at last accepting the flow of history, has not tried to oppose our independence and is ready to give us their aid and their friendship, and a treaty has just been signed between our two countries, equal and independent. On our side, while we stay vigilant, we shall respect our obligations, given freely.

Thus, in the interior and the exterior, the new Congo, our dear Republic that my government will create, will be a rich, free, and prosperous country. But so that we will reach this aim without delay, I ask all of you, legislators and citizens, to help me with all your strength.

I ask all of you to forget your tribal quarrels. They exhaust us. They risk making us despised abroad.

I ask the parliamentary minority to help my Government through a constructive opposition and to limit themselves strictly to legal and democratic channels.

I ask all of you not to shrink before any sacrifice in order to achieve the success of our huge undertaking.

In conclusion, I ask you unconditionally to respect the life and the property of your fellow citizens and of foreigners living in our country. If the conduct of these foreigners leaves something to be desired, our justice will be prompt in expelling them from the territory of the Republic; if, on the contrary, their conduct is good, they must be left in peace, for they also are working for our country's prosperity.

The Congo's independence marks a decisive step towards the liberation of the entire African continent [applause].

Sire, Excellencies, Mesdames, Messieurs, my dear fellow countrymen, my brothers of race, my brothers of struggle-- this is what I wanted to tell you in the name of the Government on this magnificent day of our complete independence.

Our government, strong, national, popular, will be the health of our country.

I call on all Congolese citizens, men, women and children, to set themselves resolutely to the task of creating a prosperous national economy which will assure our economic independence.

Glory to the fighters for national liberation!

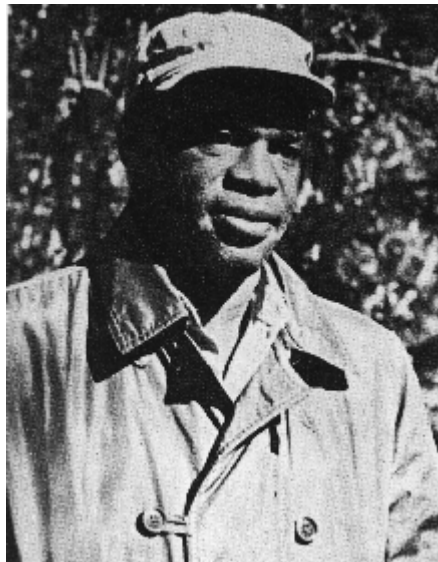
Long live independence and African unity!

Long live the independent and sovereign Congo!

[applause, long and loud]

**From: [http://www.africawithin.com/lumumba/independence\\_speech.htm](http://www.africawithin.com/lumumba/independence_speech.htm)**

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## Chapter 5

### Resistance - The Search for a National Movement

And ask no more  
to know what i am  
I'm nothing but a lump of flesh  
in which, its cry swollen great with hope  
the revolt of africa has merged

*From 'If you want to know who I am', by Noémia de Souza*

Like all African nationalism, the Mozambican form was born out of the experience of European colonialism. The source of national unity is the common suffering during the last fifty years spent under effective Portuguese rule. The nationalist assertion did not rise out of a stable community, in history a linguistic, territorial, economic and cultural unity. In Mozambique, it was colonial domination which produced the territorial community and created the basis for a psychological coherence, founded on the experience of discrimination, exploitation, forced labour, and other such aspects of colonial rule.

Communication, however, has been limited between the separate communities subjected to these same experiences. All forms of communication previously came from above, through the medium of the colonial administration. And this naturally slowed down the development of a single consciousness throughout the territorial area. In Mozambique, the situation has been aggravated by the 'Greater Portugal' policy, whereby the colony is referred to as a 'province' of Portugal, the people called 'Portuguese' by the authorities. On the radio, in the newspapers, in the schools, there is a great deal of talk about 'Portugal', and very little about 'Mozambique'.

Among the peasantry, such propaganda has done a great deal to hinder the development of a 'Mozambique' concept; and as Portugal is too distant an idea to provide a unifying factor, this has also fostered tribalism by not helping people to look beyond their immediate social unit.

In many areas where the population is small and widely scattered, contact between the colonial power and the people has been so superficial that little personal experience of domination existed. There were some groups in Eastern Nyanza who had never seen a Portuguese before the outbreak of the present war. In such areas the people had little sense of belonging either to a nation or a colony, and it was at first hard for them to understand the struggle. The arrival of the Portuguese army, however, very rapidly changed this.

### **Popular resistance**

Wherever the presence of the colonizing power was felt, some kind of resistance was shown, taking various forms from armed insurrection to wholesale exodus. But at any given moment, it was only a limited community, small in relation to the whole society, which rose against the colonizer, while the opposition itself was limited because directed against only one aspect of domination, the concrete aspect which affected that particular community at that particular time.

Active resistance was finally crushed in 1918, with the defeat of the Mokombe (King) of Barwe, in the Tete region. And from the early 1930s, the colonial administration of the young fascist state spread across Mozambique, destroying, often physically, the traditional power structure.

From this time on, both repression and resistance hardened. But the centre of resistance shifted from the traditional hierarchies, which became docile puppets of the Portuguese, to individuals and groups – though for long these remained as isolated in their aims and their activities as the traditional leaders had been.

A simple psychological rejection of the colonizer and his culture was very widespread, but it was not a conscious, rationalized stand; it was an attitude bound up with the cultural tradition of the group, its past struggles with the Portuguese and present experience of subjection.

The Portuguese wish to implant their culture throughout the territory, even if well intentioned, was completely unrealistic because of the numbers involved. Comprising less than 2 per cent of the population, they could not hope to give all the Africans an opportunity of even observing the Portuguese way of life, let alone bring them into close enough contact to absorb it. Like many colonizing nations, they also miscalculated the enthusiasm of the 'poor savages' for 'civilisation'. Since most Africans met the Portuguese only when paying taxes, when contracted for forced labour or when having their land seized, it is scarcely surprising that they should have received very unfavourable impressions of Portuguese culture. This revulsion is often

expressed in songs, dances, even carvings – traditional forms of expression which the colonizer does not understand, and through which he can thus be secretly ridiculed, denounced and threatened. The Chope, for instance, sing:

We are still angry; it's always the same story  
The oldest daughters must pay the tax  
Natanele tells the white man to leave him alone  
Natanele tells the white man to leave me be  
You, the elders must discuss our affairs  
For the man the whites appointed is the son of a nobody  
The Chope have lost the right to own their land  
Let me tell you about it...

In another song, they ridicule the attempt to impose the Portugese manners:

Listen to the song of Chigombe village  
It's tedious saying *bom dia* all the time  
Macarite and Babuane are in prison  
Because they didn't say *bom dia*,  
They had to go to Quissico to say *bom dia*.

The mercantile values of the Europeans are frequently satirized or attacked:

How it surprised me,  
My brother Nguissa,  
How it surprised me  
To take along money to buy my way.

Some of the carvings of the Mkonde people express a deep-seated hostility to the alien culture. In that area, Catholic missionaries have been very active, and under their influence many carvers have made madonnas and crucifixes, imitating European models. Unlike Makonde work on traditional themes, these Christian images are often rigidly stereotyped and lifeless. But sometimes one of them departs from the stereotype, and when it does, this is nearly always because an element of doubt or defiance has been worked into it; a Madonna is given a demon to hold instead of the Christ child; a priest is represented with the feet of a wild animal, a pieta becomes a study not of sorrow but of revenge, with the mother raising a spear over the body of her dead son.

In specific areas at specific times, these attitudes, ingrained in popular culture, crystallized into action of one kind or another; the 'elders' did 'discuss our affairs'. One form that this took was the cooperative movement, which developed in the north in the fifties. In its early stages, this was constructive rather than defiant. A number of peasants – including Mzee Lazaro Kavandame, now a member of FRELIMO's Central Committee and Provincial Secretary for Cabo Delgado – organized themselves into cooperatives, in an attempt to rationalize the production and sale of agricultural produce and so improve their economic lot. The Portuguese authorities, however, placed severe restrictions on the activities of the cooperatives, burdened them with financial levies, and kept all their meetings under strict surveillance. It was



then that the movement began to acquire a more powerful character, becoming totally hostile to the authorities.

## Early nationalism

Conditions were scarcely favourable for the spread of developed nationalist ideas throughout the country. Because of the ban on political association, the necessity for secrecy which this imposed, the erosion of traditional society and the lack of modern education in rural areas, it was at first only among a tiny minority that the idea of national, as opposed to local, action could gain currency. This minority was predominantly an urban one, composed of intellectuals and wage-earners, on individuals essentially detribalized, mostly assimilated Africans and mulattos; in other words a tiny marginal section of the population.

In the towns, the colonizing power was seen at close quarters. It was easier to understand that the colonizer's strength was built upon our weakness, and that their achievements depended on the labour of the African. Possibly the very absence of the tribal environment helped to encourage a national view, helped this group to see Mozambique as the country of all the Mozambicans, helped them to understand the power of unity.

Encouraged by the liberalism of the new Republic in Portugal (1910-1926), these groups formed societies and started newspapers with which they conducted campaigns against the abuses of colonialism, demanding equal rights, until, little by little, they began to denounce the whole colonial system.

In 1920 the *Liga Africana* was established in Lisbon, as an organization uniting the very few African and mulatto students who came to the city. Its intention was to give 'an organized character to liaisons between colonized peoples'; it participated in the Third Pan African Conference held in London and organized by W. E. B. Du Bois, and in 1923 received the Second Session of the Conference in Lisbon. It was significant that in its conception the *Liga* stood not only for national unity but also for unity between colonies against all colonizing powers, and unity among all oppressed black peoples of the world. But in fact it was weak, consisting as it did only of some twenty members and situated in Lisbon, far from the scene of possible action.

In Mozambique in the early twenties, an organization called *Grémio Africano* (African Guild) was formed, and this later evolved into the *Associação Africana*. The settlers and the administration soon became alarmed at the strength of the Association's demands, and in the early thirties, favoured by the fascist winds blowing from Portugal, they began a campaign of intimidation and infiltration, and succeeded in gaining the help of some of the leaders to direct the association along more conformist lines. A more radical wing was then formed, which broke away and created the *Instituto Negrófilo*; and this was later forced to change its name by the Salazar government, to *Centro Associativo dos Negros de Moçambique*. A tendency

developed for mulattos to join the *Associação Africana*, while black Africans were concentrated in the *Centro Associativo*.

A third organization was formed, called the *Associação dos Naturais de Moçambique*. This was originally conceived as a means of defending the rights of whites born in Mozambique; but from the 1950s it opened its doors to other ethnic groups, and after that became quite active in the struggle against racism. It even did a little to advance African education by providing scholarships. Other similar associations were formed by smaller interest groups, like Moslem Africans or different groups of Indians.

All these organizations carried out political action under the cover of social programmes, mutual aid, and cultural or athletic activities. And side by side with these movements there developed a protest press, typified by the paper *O Brado Africano* (the African Cry), which was set up by the *Associação Africana* and directed by the Albasini brothers. This press was muzzled in 1936 by the fascist government's system of press censorship, but until then it formed a fairly effective mouthpiece for revolt.

The spirit of these early movements and the nature of their protest are well illustrated by this *O Brado Africano* editorial of 27 February 1932:

“We’ve had a mouthful of it. We’ve had to put up with you, to suffer the terrible consequences of your follies, of your demands... we can no longer put up with the pernicious effects of your political and administrative decisions. From now on we refuse to make ever greater and more useless sacrifices... Enough... We insist that you carry out your fundamental duties not with laws and decrees but with acts... We want to be treated in the same way that you are. We do not aspire to your refined education... Even less so do we aspire to a life dominated by the idea of robbing your brother... We aspire to our ‘savage state’ which, however, fills your mouths and your pockets. And we demand something... we demand bread and light... We repeat that we do not want hunger or thirst or poverty or a law of discrimination based on colour... We will learn to use the scalpel... the gangrene that you spread will infect us and then we will no longer have the strength to take action. Now we have it... we, the beasts of burden...”

From this text clearly emerges a line of demarcation between colonizer and colonized; the latter views himself as a dominated whole and sets himself up against another whole, the colonizing group, with which he contests for power. It is interesting to note the complete rejection of the colonizer's values, the proud assumption of the ‘savage state’ and the definition of the colonizer's civilization as dominated by ‘the robbery of your brother’.

It is true that as yet it is not the demand for national independence which is formulated. This stage of denunciation, though, and the demand for equal rights were necessary in the development of political consciousness towards the demand for independence. It was not until after these preliminary demands had been rejected that a more radical position could be taken.

The establishment of Salazar's New State and the political repression which followed put an end to this wave of political activity. Corruption and internal dissension fomented by the government transformed the organizations into bourgeois clubs, which from then on were frequently required by the authorities to join in the chorus of allegiance to Salazar and his regime.

It was not until the end of the Second World War and the defeat of the major fascist powers, that some renewal of political activity became possible. The changes in power across the world and the resurgence of nationalism, particularly in Africa, had repercussions in the Portuguese territories, despite the continuance of the fascist government in Lisbon and the efforts made by the Portuguese authorities to insulate the areas they controlled against the ideas of self-determination gaining ground elsewhere.

### **The revolt of the intellectuals**

Again it was for the most part only the small educated minority who were in a position to follow events, who had adequate contacts with the outside world, who had been able to acquire the habit of analytical thought and so the necessary equipment to understand the colonial phenomenon as a whole.

In Mozambique a new generation of insurgents arose, active and determined to struggle on their own terms and not on the terms imposed by the colonial government. They were in a position to see the three essential aspects of their situation: racial discrimination and exploitation within the colonial system; the real weakness of the colonizer; and finally man's social evolution in general, with the contrast between the emergence of black struggle in Africa and America and the mute resistance of their own people.

They could analyse the situation, but it was difficult to do more than this. The field of action was limited first of all by the comprehensive structure of oppression, the insidious police network developed by the fascist state during its long period of strength, and secondly by the lack of contact between the politically conscious urban minority and the mass of the population who bore the brunt of exploitation, who actually suffered forced labour, forced cultivation and the daily threat of violence. It is not surprising therefore that among this minority, resistance first found a purely cultural expression.

The new resistance inspired a movement in all the arts which began during the forties and influenced poets, painters and writers from all the Portuguese colonies. From Mozambique the best-known of these are probably the painters Malangatana and Craveirinha, the short story writer Luis Bernardo Honwana, and the poets José Craveirinha and Noémia de Sousa.

The paintings of Malangatana and José Craveirinha (the nephew of the poet) draw their inspiration from the images of traditional sculpture and from African mythology,

binding them into works explosive with themes of liberation and the denunciation of colonial violence.

The short stories of Luis Bernardo Honwana, who has been recognized widely outside Africa as a master of his medium, lead the reader to make the same denunciation through a perceptive detailed analysis of human behaviour. Following a long tradition of artists working under an oppressive government, he sometimes writes in the form of parables, or centres his story around one apparently insignificant concrete event which he uses to illuminate the wider situation.

In the political poetry of the forties and fifties, three themes predominate: the reaffirmation of Africa as the mother country, spiritual home and context of a future nation; the rise of the black man elsewhere in the world, the general call to revolt; and the present sufferings of the ordinary people of Mozambique, under forced labour and in the mines.

The first of these themes is often interwoven with the poet's personal conflicts, the problems arising from his origins and family situation already described in connexion with the social position of the mulatto. In a more generalized form it tries to express the common roots of all Mozambicans in a pre-colonial African past, as in this extract from an early poem by Marcellino dos Santos, 'Here we were born':

The land where we were born  
goes back  
like time

Our forefathers  
were born  
and lived  
in that land

and they, like the coarse wild grass  
were the meagre body's veins  
running red, earth's fragrance.

Trees and granite pinnacles  
their arms  
embraced the earth  
in daily work  
and sculpting the new world's fertile rocks  
began in colour  
the great design of life...

The best example of the second theme is probably Noémia de Sousa's poem, 'Let my people go', inspired by the struggles of the American Negro:

A warm Mozambican night  
and the distant tone of marimbas reach me  
- firm, constant –  
coming, i don't know from where.

In my house of wood and zinc  
 I turn on the radionand let myself drift, lulled...  
 But voices from America stir my soul and nerves  
 And Robeson and Marion sing for me  
 Negro spirituals from Harlem  
 'Let my people go'  
 - oh let my people go  
 let my people go –  
 they say.  
 I open my eyes and can no longer sleep.  
 Anderson and Paul sound within me  
 and they are not the soft voices of a lullaby  
 Let my people go...

The sufferings of the forced labourer and the mine worker inspired many poems, and there are powerful examples from all the main poets of the period: de Sousa's 'Magaíça'; Craveirinha's 'Mamparra M'Gaiza', 'Mamana Saquina'; Marcellino dos Santos's 'A terra Treme'. Those poems, however, are interesting perhaps less for their power and eloquence than for the terms in which they state the situation. For they illustrate very vividly the weakness as well as the strength of the movement to which their authors belonged. None of these writers had themselves experienced forced labour; none of them was subject to the Native Labour Code, and they write of it as outsiders, reading their own intellectualized reactions into the minds of the African miner and forced labourer. Noémia de Sousa, for instance, writes in 'Magaíça':

Bemused 'Magaíça' lit the lamp  
 To look for lost illusions  
 His youth, his health, which stayed behind  
 Deep in the mines of Johannesburg

Craveirinha, speaking of 'the Chope man' on contract in the Rand, writes 'each time he thinks of escape he is a week in a gallery without sun.' But in act there is no question of 'escape': the Mozambican contracts for the mines in order to bring back cash for the family and avoid forced labour under even more unfavourable economic terms at home. The very way in which such poems are conceived, in a style of eloquent self-pity, is alien to the African reaction. Compare any of these poems with the Chope songs quoted earlier. It is clear that despite the efforts of their authors to be 'African', they have taken more from the European tradition than from the African. This indicates the lack of contact existing between these intellectuals and the rest of the country. At that time they were no more in a position to forge a true national movement than were the peasants of Lázaro Kavandame's cooperatives. On the other hand, their strength lay in their enthusiasm and ability, gained partly from their knowledge of European history and revolutionary thinking, to analyse a political situation and express it in clear and vivid terms.

Noémia de Sousa wrote this powerful call to revolt when one of her companions in the movement had been arrested and deported after the strikes of 1947:

But what matter?  
They have stolen João from us  
but João is us all  
Because of that João hasn't left us  
João 'was' not, João is and will be  
For João is us all, we are a multitude  
and the multitude  
who can carry off the multitude and lock it in a cage?

In *Black Cry (Grito Negro)*, Craveirinha achieved perhaps one of the most vivid statements on alienation and revolt ever written. Because of its extremely tight and meaningful musical structure, this poem loses much of its power in translation; but it is worth quoting in full, as it is among the most important and influential works of the time:

I am coal!  
you tear me brutally from the ground  
and make of me your mine, boss

I am coal  
and you burn me, boss  
to serve you forever as your driving force  
but not forever, boss

I am coal  
and must burn, exploited  
burn alive like tar, my brother  
until no more your mine, boss

I am coal  
and must burn  
and consume everything in the fire of my combustion

Yes, boss  
I will be your coal!\*

\*(In Portuguese the words coal, brother, boss, combustion, rhyme: *carvão, irmão, patrão, combustão.*)

Few of Craveirinha's group succeeded in escaping from their isolation and bridging the gap between theory and practice. Noémia de Sousa left Mozambique, has stopped writing poetry, and now lives in Paris; Man, including Craveirinha and Honwana, are in prison. Malangatana is still working in Mozambique but closely supervised and harassed by the police. Of all those mentioned here, only Marcelino dos Santos, after a long period of exile in Europe, joined the liberation movement, and since then his poetry has changed and developed under the impetus of the armed struggle. The work of Craveirinha and his companions, however, influenced and inspired a slightly younger generation of intellectuals, many of whom were able to escape the surveillance of the police and have thrown themselves into the

liberation movement. There, in the context of the armed struggle, a new literary tradition is taking shape.

This is the generation which grew up after the Second World War and who were at school during the early movement for self-determination elsewhere in Africa. It was at school that they began developing their political ideas and at school that they began to organize themselves. The Portuguese education system itself gave them good cause for discontent. Those few Africans and mulattos who reached secondary school only did so with great difficulty. In the predominantly white schools they were constantly subject to discrimination. On top of this, the schools attempted to cut them off from their background, annihilate the values they had been brought up with, and make them 'Portuguese' in consciousness though not in rights. How they failed is illustrated by this account from an African girl who was at a technical school in Lourenço Marques only a few years ago:

Josina Muthemba: The colonialists wanted to deceive us with their teaching; they taught us only the history of Portugal, the geography of Portugal; they wanted to form in us a passive mentality, to make us resigned to their domination. We couldn't react openly, but we were aware of their lie; we knew that what they said was false; that we were Mozambicans and we could never be Portuguese. (F.I.)

In 1949 the secondary school pupils, led by some who had been to South Africa to study, formed *Núcleo dos Estudantes Africanos Secundários de Moçambique* (NESAM), which was linked to the *Centro Associativo dos Negros de Moçambique*, and which similarly under cover of social and cultural activities, conducted among the youth a political campaign to spread the idea of national independence and encourage resistance to the cultural subjection which the Portuguese imposed. From the first the police kept a close watch on the movement. I myself, as one of the students returned from South Africa who had founded NESAM, was arrested and questioned at some length about our activities in 1949. Nevertheless NESAM managed to survive into the sixties, and even launched a magazine, *Alvor*, which although heavily censored helped to spread the ideas developed at the group's meetings and discussions.

NESAM's effectiveness, like that of all the early organizations, was severely limited by its tiny membership, restricted in this instance to the black African pupils of secondary school level. But in at least three ways it made an important contribution to the revolution. It spread nationalist ideas among the black educated youth. It achieved a certain revaluation of national culture, which counteracted the attempts by the Portuguese to make African students despise and abandon their own people; NESAM provided the only opportunity to study and discuss Mozambique in its own right and not as an appendage of Portugal's. And, most important perhaps, by cementing personal contacts, it establishes a nation-wide network of communication, which extended among old members as well as those still at school, and which could be used by a future underground. For instance, when FRELIMO established itself in

the Lourenço Marques region in 1962-3, the NESAM members were among the first to be mobilised and provided a structure to receive the party. The secret [police, PIDE, also understood this and banned NESAM; in 1964 arrested some of its members and forced others into exile. It was at this time that Josina Muthemba was active in NESAM, and she describes this state of oppression and the fate of her own group:

“We wanted to organize ourselves, but we were harassed by the secret police. We had cultural and educational activities, but during discussions, talks and debates we had to keep a constant lookout for the police... The police persecuted us, they even banned NESAM.

“I was also arrested when I was running away from Mozambique. I was arrested at the Victoria Falls on the frontier between Rhodesia and Zambia. The Rhodesian police arrested me and sent me back to Lourenço Marques (the Rhodesian police work closely with the Portuguese police). There were eight of us in our group, boys and girls. The Portuguese police threatened us, interrogated us and beat up the boys. I was in prison for six months without being sentenced or condemned. I was in prison for six months without them bringing a case against me at all.” (F.I.)

Shortly after this, seventy-five NESAM members were arrested by the South African police and handed over to PIDE, while they were trying to make their way from Swaziland to Zambia. They are still in concentration camps in southern Mozambique.

In 1963 it was some former NESAM members who created UNEMO, the Mozamican Student Union which is formally a part of Frelimo, and which organizes Mozambican students studying through FRELIMO auspices.

Within Portugal, the very few black or mulatto students who reached an institute of higher learning gathered in the *Casa dos Estudantes do Imperio* (CEI), and also established a link through the *Club dos Maratimos* with sailors from the colonies who frequently came to Lisbon. In 1951 the *Centro de Estudos Africanos* was formed by CEI members, although not itself a part of CEI. Despite the oppressive measures of the police the CEI worked actively, until its dissolution in 1965, to spread the word of national independence in the colonies, to diffuse information about the colonies to the world beyond Portugal, and to harden and consolidate nationalist ideas among the youth. In 1961 a large group of these students, frustrated and finally threatened by the persistent nature of police action, fled across the border and made their way to France and Switzerland, making a public and irreversible break with the Portuguese régime. Most of these immediately established open contact with their nationalist movements, and a number of these former students of the ‘Portuguese Empire’ are now among the leaders of FRELIMO.

## **Industrial action**

If it was among the intellectuals that political thought and organization developed furthest during the period following the Second World War, it was among the urban proletariat that the first experiments in organized active resistance took place. The



concentration of labour in and near the towns, and the terrible working conditions and poverty, provided the fundamental impetus to revolt; but in the absence of trade unions, it was only clandestine political groups which could provide the organization necessary. The only unions permitted by the Portuguese are the fascist unions, whose leaders are chosen by the employers and the state, and who, in any event, extend membership only to whites and occasionally to assimilated Africans.

In 1947 the radical discontent of the labour force, combined with political agitation, produced a series of strikes, in the docks of Lourenço Marques and in neighbouring plantations, which culminated in an abortive uprising in Lourenço Marques in 1948. The participants were punished ferociously, and several hundred Africans were deported to São Tomé. In 1956, again at Lourenço Marques, there was a dock strike which ended in the death of forty-nine participants. Then, in 1962-3, the FRELIMO underground took over the work of organizing and set up a more coordinated system, which helped to plan the series of dock strikes which broke out in 1963 at Lourenço Marques, Beira and Nacala. Despite its wider extent, this last effort also ended only in the death and arrest of many participants. Although some political organization existed among the workers responsible for the strikes, the strike action itself was very largely spontaneous and for the most part localized. Its failure and the brutal repression which followed in every instance have temporarily discouraged both the masses and the leadership from considering strike action as a possible effective political weapon in the context of Mozambique.

### **Towards unity**

Both the agitation of the intellectuals and the strikes of the urban labour force were doomed to failure, because in both cases it was the action only of a tiny isolated group. For a government like Portugal's, which has set its face against democracy and is prepared to use extremes of brutality to crush opposition, it is easy to deal with such isolated pockets of resistance. It was the very failure of these attempts, however, and the fierce repression which followed, that made this clear and prepared the ground for more widely based action. The urban population of Mozambique amounts altogether to less than half a million. A nationalist movement without firm roots in the countryside could never hope to succeed.

Some developments in the countryside which took place in the period just preceding the formation of FRELIMO were of enormous importance. These took the most extreme direction in the northern area around Mueda, though they had their milder counterparts in other regions. They were first of all the effect on the population of the failure of the cooperative movement already described. The reaction of the leaders is best illustrated in the words of Lázaro Kavandame himself:

“I couldn't sleep all night. I knew that from that moment they wouldn't leave me in peace, that everything I did would be closely watched and controlled by the authorities; that they would call me more and more often to the administrative post and that I would be constantly watched by the police. My only hope was to run

away... We immediately made arrangements to organize a meeting of the people's leaders to discuss what we should do to regain our liberty and to drive the Portuguese oppressors out of our country. After a long and important discussion, we reached the conclusion that the Makonde people alone could not succeed in driving out the enemy. We then decided to join forces with Mozambicans from the rest of the country." [Official report.]

The other development, also associated with the cooperatives, was an increase in spontaneous agitation, which culminated in a major demonstration at Mueda in 1960. This demonstration, though passing unnoticed by the rest of the world, acted as a catalyst in the region. Over 500 people were shot down by the Portuguese, and many who up to that time had not considered the use of violence now denounced peaceful resistance as futile. The experience of Teresa Mblale, now a FRELIMO militant, shows why: 'I saw how the colonialists massacred the people at Mueda. That was when I lost my uncle. Our people were unarmed when they began to shoot.' She was one of the thousands who determined never again to be unarmed in the face of Portuguese violence.

A fuller account of that day comes from Alberto-Joaquim Chipande, then aged 22, and now one of the leaders in Cabo Delgado:

"Certain leaders worked among us. Some of them were taken by the Portuguese – Tiago Muller, Faustino Vanomba, Kibiriti Diwane – in the massacre at Mueda on 16 June 1960. How did that happen? Well, some of these men had made contact with the authorities and asked for more liberty and more pay... After a while, when people were giving support to these leaders, the Portuguese sent police through the villages inviting people to a meeting at Mueda. Several thousand people came to hear what the Portuguese would say. As it turned out, the administrator had asked the governor of Delgado Province to come from Porto Amélia and to bring a company of troops. But these troops were hidden when they got to Mueda. We didn't see them at first.

"Then the governor invited our leaders into the administrator's office. I was waiting outside. They were in there for four hours. When they came out on the verandah, the governor asked the crowd who wanted to speak. Many wanted to speak, and the governor told them all to stand to one side.

"Then without another word he ordered the police to bind the hands of those who had stood to one side, and the police began beating them. I was close by. I saw it all. When the people saw what was happening, they began to demonstrate against the Portuguese, and the Portuguese simply ordered the police trucks to come and collect these arrested persons. So there were more demonstrations against this. At that moment the troops were still hidden, and the people went up close to the police to stop the arrested persons from being taken away. So the governor called the troops, and when they appeared he told them to open fire. They killed about 600 people. Now the Portuguese say they have punished that governor, but of course they have only sent him somewhere else. I myself escaped because I was close to a graveyard where I could take cover, and then I ran away." (D.I.).

After this massacre things in the north could never return to normal. Throughout the region it had aroused the most bitter hatred against the Portuguese and showed once and for all that peaceful resistance was futile.

Thus everywhere it was the very severity of repression that created the necessary conditions for the development of a strong, militant nationalist movement. The tight police state drove all political action underground, and – partly because of the difficulties and dangers involved – underground activity turned out to be the best school in which to form a body of tough, devoted and radical political workers. The excesses of the régime destroyed all possibilities of reforms which, by improving the conditions a little, might have secured the main interests of colonial rule from a serious attack for some time to come.

The first attempts to create a nation-wide radical nationalist movement were made by Mozambicans working in neighbouring countries, where they were beyond the immediate reach of PIDE. At first the old problem of inadequate communications led to the establishment of three separate movements: UDENAMO (*União Nacional Democrática de Moçambique*) formed in 1960 in Salisbury; MANU (*Mozambique African National Union*) formed in 1961 from a number of smaller groups already established among Mozambicans working in Tanganyika and Kenya, one of the largest being the Mozambique Makonde Union; UNAMI (*União Africana de Moçambique Independente*) started by exiles from the Tete region living in Malawi.

The accession of many former colonies to independence in the late fifties and early sixties favoured the formation of ‘exile’ movements, and for Mozambique, Tanganyika’s independence, gained in 1961, seemed to offer new scope. All three movements established separate headquarters in Dar es Salaam soon afterwards.

In 1961, too, an intensification of repression in all the Portuguese followed the revolt in Angola and caused an influx of refugees into neighbouring countries, particularly Tanganyika (now Tanzania). These recent exiles from the interior, many of whom did not already belong to any of the existing organizations, exercised strong pressure for the formation of a single united body. External conditions also favoured unity: the Conference of the Nationalist Organizations of the Portuguese Territories (CONCP) held at Casablanca in 1961 and attended by UDENAMO made a strong call for the unity of nationalist movements against Portuguese colonialism. A conference of all nationalist movements, called by Ghana’s President Kwame Nkrumah, also encouraged the formation of united fronts, and in Tanganyika President Julius Nyerere personally exerted influence on the movements established in the territory to unite. Thus on 25 June 1962 the three movements in Dar es Salaam merged to form the Mozambique Liberation Front (FRELIMO), and preparations were made to hold a conference in the following September which would define the aims of the Front and work out a programme for action.

A brief account of a few among the leaders of the new movement will illustrate how various political and para-political organizations from all over the country contributed

to it. The Vice-President, the Reverend Uria Simango, is a Protestant pastor from the Beira region who had been involved in the mutual aid associations and was the leader of UDENAMO. Also from the mutual aid association of the Beira region came Silvero Nungu, later FRELIMO Secretary for Administration, and Samuel Dhlakama, now a member of the Central Committee. From the peasant cooperatives of northern Mozambique came Lázaro Kavandame, later Provincial Secretary for Cabo Delgado; also Jonas Namashulua, and others. From the mutual assistance associations of Lourenço Marques and Chai Chai in the south of Mozambique came the late Mateus Muthemba, and Shaffrudin M. Khan, who became FRELIMO representative in Cairo and is now representative in the United States. Marcelino dos Santos, later FRELIMO Secretary for External Affairs and now Secretary of the Department of Political Affairs, is a poet of international standing; he was active in the literary movement in Lourenço Marques and then spent some years of exile in France.

I myself am from the Gaza district of southern Mozambique, and, like many of us, my involvement with resistance of one form or another goes back to my childhood. I began life, as most Mozambican children do, in a village, and until the age of ten I spent my days herding the family livestock with my brothers and absorbing the traditions of my tribe and family. That I went to school at all I owe to the far-sightedness of my mother, who was my father's third and last wife, and a woman of considerable character and intelligence. In trying to continue my education after primary school, I experienced all the frustrations and difficulties in store for an African child attempting to enter the Portuguese system. Eventually I managed to reach South Africa, and with the help of some of my teachers I continued studying on scholarships to college level. It was during this period that my work with NESAM, and so my serious troubles with the police, began. When I was offered a scholarship to America, the Portuguese authorities decided to send me to Lisbon University instead. During my brief stay there, however, I was harassed so constantly by the police that it interfered with my studies, and I made efforts to take up my scholarship in the United States. Succeeding, I studied sociology and anthropology at Oberlin and Northwestern Universities, and then worked for the United Nations as a research officer in the Trusteeship section.

Meanwhile I kept in touch as far as possible with developments in Mozambique, and I became increasingly convinced from what I saw and from my occasional contacts through the UN with the Portuguese diplomats that normal political pressure and agitation would not affect the Portuguese stand. In 1961 I was able to visit Mozambique on leave from the UN, and travelling widely saw for myself what had changed, or not changed, since I had left. On my return I left the United Nations to engage openly in the liberation struggle, and took a job lecturing at Syracuse University which left me the time and the opportunity to study the situation further. I had established contacts with all the separate liberation parties, but I had refused to join any of them separately, and was among those campaigning strongly for unity in 1961 and 1962.

The Mozambicans who gathered in Dar es Salaam in 1962 together represented almost every region of Mozambique and every sector of the population. Nearly everyone had some experience of resistance on a small scale, and of the reprisals which normally followed. Both inside and outside the country, conditions were favourable to the nationalist struggle. Our problem was whether we could weld together these advantages so as to make our movement strong throughout the country, and capable of taking effective action which, unlike previous isolated efforts, would hurt the Portuguese more than it hurt us.

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**Agostinho Neto**

## **Commemorating the 15th Anniversary of MPLA**

### **COMPATRIOTS! COMRADES!**

Today our Movement is completing 15 years of life, a life of continuous action, of constant growth and victories.

Our People's Movement for the Liberation of Angola, the heroic vanguard of the fighting Angolan people, has been successfully leading the armed struggle for national liberation for more than ten years, winning for the Angolan people not only freedom in a part of our national territory, but also the respect and esteem of other peoples. We have established new and more just relations at the international level, affirming in a today uncontested way our political personality in the world, quite distinct from that of Portugal. We are and always shall be Angolans. Never Portuguese.

The founding of the People's Movement for the Liberation of Angola, marked by the publication in Luanda of the Political Manifesto of 10 December 1956, signaled an historic change in our people's attitude towards colonialism, expressing the Angolan people's deepseated desire to struggle for independence. Four years later, on 4 February 1961, the armed struggle of resistance against shameful slavery, for freedom and democracy, was launched.

These are still our objectives: we are struggling for national independence and democracy.

It required several years of clandestine work, using various forms of action, to mobilise the most conscious part of the Angolan nation and to go over to open confrontation with the Portuguese occupiers.

After fifteen years' experience of revolutionary struggle, our Movement prides itself on having built itself up from North to South, embracing all classes and social strata in fraternal unity in the struggle for independence and dignity.

Guerrilla war continues to inflict significant losses on the enemy, both in lives and equipment. Military activity in Cabinda, Cuanza-Norte, Luanda, Moxico, Cuando-Cubango, Lunda and Bi' is increasingly discouraging the colonialist generals, who think of themselves as great strategists - though they are in fact specialists in

retreating. But their genocidal acts, cruelty and savagery cannot halt the advance of our Movement's military units in the field.

Since 1961, the enemy, Portuguese colonialism and some of its allies, have never ceased to shout in despair either that the war has ended or that the corpses carried away by helicopter are a consequence of operations by small groups infiltrated in from adjacent countries.

Even now, when cannon shells are destroying their barracks in the East and when they are being forced to withdraw their troops, the Portuguese generals continue just as insolently and shamelessly to try to have it believed that Angola is really at peace. They have even set up "villages of peace", where there reigns only the peace of cemeteries or prisons.

But the soldier, the trader, the farmer, the truckdriver and the administrative official know perfectly well that Angola is at war and that it is a war which will end only with the victory of the Angolan people.

It is not difficult to understand the embarrassing situation in which the Portuguese rulers now find themselves. They are now threatening each other in Lisbon because they do not know how to break with the Salazarist line and make a graceful entry into the democratic era which the Portuguese people are demanding ever more forcibly.

The fascist rulers in Lisbon were not able to solve the colonial problem, but they still believe that by evading it they will succeed in effacing from the hearts of Angolan patriots the indomitable will to be independent.

The Lisbon fascists were not able to solve the problem in 1961 and war started in Angola. They were not able to solve it in 1963 and war broke out in Guinea. They did not want to face facts in 1964 and that year armed struggle began in Mozambique. Since 1928 the Portuguese fascists have failed to understand that the Portuguese people must be freed from PIDE oppression and misery in Portugal itself, and that the Portuguese people's present demand for an end to the colonial era must be met. And today they are confronting the violence of Armed Revolutionary Action.

Today they are having to fight on four fronts for only one reason - colonialism.

Such is the "peace" the colonialists and fascists talk about so much.

In our country the People's Movement for the Liberation of Angola has gone from small to large, from weak to strong, and its strength will constantly grow.

The attention and prestige we have throughout the world today is great. This evolution is clear proof of the fact that, determined and firm, the Angolan people are invincible.

Therefore, the Portuguese government cannot ignore the Angolan people's will or the will of the Portuguese people. Both want an end to the colonial war and a solution which will satisfy our aspirations. In Angola we want the end of exploitation and oppression. We want Independence and Democracy.

Our political programme clearly indicates that the MPLA is opening the way to broad and genuine cooperation between men of different races. We are not against the white man simply because he is white. We are against racist and colonialist whites.

For us independence does not mean eliminating the white man from our country. It does not mean the appropriation of honestly acquired property. What it does mean is that political power must be in the hands of our people. Our country's economy must be controlled by our people and made to serve a free and progressive life.

There are now serious contradictions between the settlers in Angola and the colonial administration. These contradictions will sharpen. They will be transformed into open conflict once the interests of the settlers are increasingly subordinated to the government's war policy.

But why this war? What is this war for? To mortgage Angola off to foreign countries? To make the farmer and trader pay more taxes? To oblige the landowner to maintain a military unit of soldiers who are mostly demoralised? To make it impossible for anyone to say what he thinks about the problems of his country without being bothered by the PIDE?

What is this war for? In the name of what is it being waged? Portugal's prestige? For the defence of the West? For economic reasons?

If it is none of these reasons, then what is this war for? Why murder Angolan people, old people, children and women, destroying crops with herbicides and committing the greatest atrocities?

Is it in order to hand Angola over to South Africa or the United States of America?

There is no way out of this situation apart from recognizing our people's right to Independence. Without such recognition, without the Portuguese government handing over power to the genuine representatives of the Angolan people, there will be no peace, no respite for any Portuguese in Angola.



It would be good if the settlers were to understand that it is not in their interests to throw themselves into the arms of South Africa, the United States, France or Federal Germany. In this event, they would be as colonised and exploited as us.

Their interests can only be protected through the establishment of just relations with the Angolan people, by their recognising that our desire for independence is just and by respecting our right to determine our own affairs. Today everyone is suffering because of the war, because of Lisbon's disastrous policy of repression.

The armed forces of the People's Movement for the Liberation of Angola are increasing their capacity from day to day. Conscious of the situation we are now passing through, they will neither retreat nor be fooled by the fake "peace" the colonialists are offering in the villages.

We will not accept any kind of autonomy as a solution, nor the honorary titles on which some Portuguese rulers appear to be banking at present. No solution can be found for Angola without the concrete participation and agreement of the MPLA.

So long as shells have not yet started to explode in the big towns, so long as commercial firms, banks and vehicles have not started to blow up in the urban centres, so long as the soldier still knows where the rear is, this is the time to safeguard lives and property.

### **COMPATRIOTS, COMRADES,**

With dedication and the spirit of self-sacrifice, MPLA militants are ever more effectively fighting the colonialist barbarian who has been exploiting us for centuries.

But we still have a long road to travel and we are prepared to endure a protracted war.

We have entered a new phase of our national liberation struggle.

We effectively control a vast part of our territory, where it is difficult for commandos or special troops to penetrate or operate on the ground. Whenever they try to leave their barracks, the enemy suffer heavy losses.

In the areas under our Movement's control we have organised our people's independent life, establishing simple forms of people's power and organising schools and medical care.

The colonialists' crime of using chemical agents on our crops has not lessened our production efforts.

Support from abroad is an important factor in our struggle. In recent years international support for our people's struggle has become increasingly broadbased. Practising an independent policy, our Movement is not subordinated to the policy of any other country or bloc of countries. Because of this line we are today able to maintain friendly relations with different countries in the world, both socialist and capitalist. One of the principles guiding our relations with other countries and political organisations is that each respect the other's independence and right to follow the road suited to the defence of the interests of their respective peoples.

Hence, maintaining friendly relations with the Soviet Union, China, Yugoslavia, Sweden or Holland does not mean that we mechanically follow the policy or ideology of any one of them, even if their experiences are useful to us. In any case, the campaign mounted by the enemy and their lackeys claiming that the MPLA is a communist organisation, sometimes linking it with the Soviet Union and at other times with China, can only be seen as propaganda intended to fool our people. What is certain is that Portugal is becoming increasingly isolated politically.

The MPLA is a progressive movement, for it is closely linked with the interests of the Angolan people, which it defends with vigor and courage, even demanding of its militants heroic sacrifices in armed combat. At the same time, the MPLA is authentically African in that it is defending the frontiers of freedom in Africa in close cooperation with other African peoples.

Yet the enemy are still in our country and are treacherously hatching intrigues, bribing or attempting to bribe neighbouring countries and manoeuvring politically to stay in Angola. For this reason, our fight must be continuous and increasingly vigorous.

All Angolans united, we must fight Portuguese colonialism. We must deal it blows from all sides, and carry out ever more action. There can be no freedom without independence and no independence without struggle.

The proposals on autonomy are of no use to us. Modifications in the administrative structure and new methods of production and distribution of material goods are merely palliatives which solve nothing.

The promotion of Angolans to higher posts in the colonial administration, increased salaries and the introduction of higher education are merely consequences of the war. The enemy are trying to give the impression that they are introducing measures for the progress of our people. But these measures have been taken only because the enemy can feel the tips of our bayonets at their throats. That is all.

The rural reorganisation campaigns are intended merely to officer and control the Angolan people to prevent them from contacting the guerrillas.

Indeed, most of the colonialists' actions are governed by fear. Everything is done for propaganda purposes and to demobilise the people. For example, they open schools and universities, but they immediately persecute, arrest, deport and murder Angolan students who dare to enroll in these schools.

All this is comprehensible if we consider that since 1482 Portugal has never been interested in the progress of the Angolan people. What did interest it was stealing land and using our resources for itself. It was greed for material wealth that gave rise to colonialism.

How can a country like Portugal (where in a single night, according to the daily "O SECULO", they had to arrest more than 200 vagrants and prostitutes in Lisbon's Barrio Alto neighbourhood) be interested in the progress of the Angolan people?

How can a government which keeps its people in misery, in degrading subjugation, and which denies its citizens the right to choose the kind of government they want, be concerned about the progress of the Angolan people?

### **COMPATRIOTS, COMRADES,**

We must free ourselves from colonialism. All Angolans must unite around the MPLA. There are no hatreds between us which can make us forget the enemy. All those who feel the patriotic desire to liberate our country can join the MPLA, which will give them weapons and make fighters of them.

A few compatriots are allowing themselves to go along with reactionary and counter-revolutionary currents, which, subordinated to imperialism but under the cover of more or less progressive watchwords, are merely delaying our victory.

The MPLA is prepared to accept in its ranks all those who admit the mistakes they have made. They will be well received.

The 15 years of our Movement's activity have taught us to adopt a policy of clemency, even towards captured soldiers or those who come of their own free will to ask for the MPLA's protection. The MPLA will give those who leave the unjust war the necessary facilities to establish new conditions of life.

The people in the Angolan district of Cabinda have already realised the mistake they were about to make by accepting the Portuguese government's wily proposals. Alexandre Taty, Nzita Tiago and other traitors who still held illusions ruined themselves through their opportunism.

Now that they fully understand Portugal's objectives, all the people in Cabinda district must rise up to a man and organise themselves within the MPLA, arms in hand, to fight against the abuses, the corruption and the exploitation of the colonialists.

The MPLA has sufficient weapons to arm every man, it has an ideology and a policy for the liberation of the country. It really is our people's only leading force.

### **COMRADES,**

Let us strengthen our activity on every front. Let us organise new groups of the Movement and go into action, even without succeeding in making contact with the leadership of the MPLA.

Many MPLA groups paralyse their action for lack of contact with the leadership. They are eternally waiting for directives.

But it is easy to arrive at directives by analysing the concrete conditions on the spot. Political mobilisation, either through personal contact or through leaflets, contributions in money and kind for the guerrilla war and other higher forms of action are permanent directives which must be put into practice.

Everywhere action is needed. In the offices and in the factories, in the barracks and in the neighbourhoods, in the mines, in the villages and towns.

The road to our independence is being travelled over the blood of the most beloved sons of our people. The dedication and heroism of our militants is a decisive factor for the outcome of this struggle. And despite the machinations of the enemy, our people will triumph.

On this historic date when we are celebrating the 15th anniversary of the founding of our Movement, we are happy to affirm that there are no cannon, helicopters or defoliants capable of shaking our people's will. Colonialism will be defeated. An era of cooperation between all will be achieved.

### **OUR VICTORY IS CERTAIN!**